

## **Gee Whiz Facts**

**(NOTE: The savings are based on the use of recycled materials over raw materials)**

### **Recycling Steel Saves....**

All steel products are 100% recyclable.

Recycling one pound of steel saves enough energy to light a 60 watt light bulb for 26 hours.

Recycling one ton of steel saves 2500 pounds of iron ore, 1000 pounds of coal and 40 pounds of limestone.

Recycling steel saves 40% of water used to make steel from ores.

Recycling steel reduces air pollution by 86%.

Recycling steel reduces water pollution by 76%.

Steel cans take 80-100 years to decompose.

### **Recycling Aluminum Saves....**

Recycling aluminum reduces energy use by 90%.

Energy saved from recycling one aluminum can will run a TV for three hours.

Recycling one aluminum can saves the energy equivalent of one cup of gasoline.

Recycling aluminum reduces air pollution by 95%.

An aluminum can takes 200-500 years to decompose.

Each pound of aluminum makes 32 cans.

### **Recycling Paper Saves....**

Every ton of paper recycled saves 380 gallons of oil.

Recycling one ton of paper saves 17 trees.

Recycling paper reduces air pollution by 74%.

Recycling paper reduces water pollution by 35%.

You use on average, 580 pounds of paper each year.

The typical office worker throws away 180 pounds of high grade recyclable paper every year.

Over 500,000 trees are used to supply Americans with their Sunday newspapers every week.

Paper takes about a month to decompose.

### **Recycling Glass Saves...**

Glass is 100% recyclable.

Approximately 41 billion glass containers are produced in the United States each year.

For glass companies, recycling extends furnace life & reduces energy costs.

Recycling one glass bottle saves enough energy to light a 100 watt bulb for four hours.

Recycling a ton of glass saves the equivalent of nine gallons of fuel oil.

Since glass does not degrade, a bottle thrown in a landfill today would still be around in the year 3000.

Each glass container produced in the US contains, on the average, 30% recycled glass.

### **Recycling Plastic Saves...**

It takes 5 recycled two-liter PET bottles to make one square foot of carpet.  
PET bottles and containers are actually a form of polyester, which is why it is so easy to  
recycle bottles into T-shirts, sweaters and socks.

It takes 35 two-liter recycled PET bottles to make the soft filling inside a sleeping  
bag, called "fiberfill."

About 1,200 soda bottles could carpet the average living room.  
Plastic makes up eight percent of our trash by weight, but is 24% of the volume.

### **Composting Saves....**

Yard waste (leaves & grass) make up approximately 20 percent of the waste stream or  
about 230 pounds per person per year.

Food waste make up approximately nine percent of the waste stream or  
about 100 pounds per person per year.

Composting Improves The Soil  
Composting Prevents Fertilizer Runoff  
Composting Reduces Disposal Costs

### **Reducing, Reusing, Recycling and Composting Saves...**

Energy  
Landfill Space  
Natural Resources  
Makes Less Pollution (than if raw, virgin materials are used)

### **Buying Recycled....**

Close the "Loop" so that we actually use the products and packaging that  
are made from recycled materials.

**45% Of An Aluminum Can Is Made From Recycled Aluminum!**

**40% Of Newspapers Are Made From Recycled Paper!**

**37% of Corrugated Boxes Are Made From  
Recycled Paper and Cardboard!**

**35% Of Most Cereal Boxes Are Made From Recycled Paper!**  
(look for gray on the inside of the box)

**25% Of A Glass Bottle Is Made From Recycled Glass!**

**25% Of A Metal Can Is Made From Recycled Metal!**

## **To Make a Ton, You Would Need**

Making a ton of something equaling 2,000 pounds takes a lot of materials. We can use either raw materials or recycled materials to make the same items. By looking at the difference between two ways of making the same thing, we can learn how our environment is helped or hurt by our decisions.

### **To Make a Ton of Paper**

#### **We Use These Raw Materials**

3,688 pounds of wood  
216 pounds of lime  
360 pounds of salt cake  
76 pounds of soda ash  
24,000 gallons of water  
28 million BTUs of energy

#### **Resources Saved by Recycling One Ton of Newspaper**

Is the equivalent of one ton of paper made from about 17 trees.  
Conserves two to three cubic yards of landfill space.

### **To Make a Ton of Glass**

#### **We Use These Raw Materials**

1,330 pounds of sand  
433 pounds of soda ash  
433 pounds of limestone  
151 pounds of feldspar  
15.2 million BTUs of energy

#### **Resources Saved by Recycling Glass:**

If we use a mixture of 1/2 recycled glass and 1/2 raw materials, we reduce  
Water consumption by 50 percent.  
Mining wastes by 79 percent.  
Air pollutants by 14 percent.

### **To Make One Ton of Aluminum**

#### **We Would Use These Raw Materials**

8,766 pounds of bauxite  
1,020 pounds of petroleum coke  
966 pounds of soda ash  
238 pounds of lime  
197 million BTUs of energy

#### **Resources Saved by Recycling Aluminum**

Recycling Aluminum reduces:  
Water consumption by 95 percent.  
Energy use by 95 percent.  
Air pollution by 95 percent.

### **To Make A Ton of Steel:**

#### **We Use These Raw Materials:**

1,970 pounds of iron ore  
791 pounds of petroleum coke  
454 pounds of lime  
29 million BTUs of energy

#### **Resources Saved by Recycling Steel**

Recycling steel reduces:  
Energy consumption by 74 percent.  
Air pollutants by 86 percent.  
Water used by 40 percent.  
Water pollutants by 76 percent.  
Mining wastes by 97 percent

